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Since Chancellor away Munich today Tyler and I saw von Brentano this afternoon, and asked him for his views Berlin. He gave me account Smirnov talk with Chancellor which already reported (Embtel 1080). He emphasized that Smirnov had not repeat not referred to transfer power to GDR or to what measures would be taken with regard Berlin, had said but that "occupation statute" would be abolished.

Von Brentano then expressed himself in vein utmost seriousness about possible future developments. He said present situation could not be compared with 1948 as this time there would be no repeat no open blockade. After Soviet Union had denounced Four Power Agreements Berlin and had declared GDR sovereign, latter would proceed with great

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- 2 -

caution, would take no repeat no steps at first, and would exercise controls in just same way Soviets, "possibly even more smoothly". Perhaps 6 weeks later, GDR would say that all Germans travelling to or from Berlin must obtain GDR approval. This would have effect practice sealing off Berlin from FedRep and choking it economically and politically to point collapse.

Brentano stressed his opinion if Western Powers do not repeat not react to first step with utmost firmness and determination, avalanche will be let loose which nothing will be able stop, with catastrophic consequences for Europe and free world: "the West would then have lost the first bloodless blow of Third World War."

Brentano stressed repeatedly "in full awareness responsibilities he was assuming" his conviction that firm stand now repeat now would cause Soviets back down. In this connection he had been horrified ("konsterniert") by paper [] given him last night, (Embtl 1080) in particular by the 3 alternatives of which last accepts de facto recognition GDR. He regretted have to say that those who had worked on this paper were grossly ignorant of its implications and consequences. At this point, I said that we had also

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- 70 -
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- 3 -

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received this paper which is being studied, that we had not repeat not passed on it, and that I personally had grave doubts that we would subscribe to it, although I had as yet received no repeat no instructions on the subject. I also said that we had not/been consulted on its preparation.

Brentano said he was leaving immediately after our talk for Berlin and would see Brandt, Amrehn, and Senat. He would be back Monday and would meet Tuesday with German Ambassadors from Paris, Washington, Rome, Moscow and London, who have been called to Bonn.

He said Chancellor had yesterday sent off letter to Secretary expressing his concern, and would like see me soon. He said Chancellor is returning tomorrow night from Munich and I plan see him Sunday if possible.

Brentano said he thought that after Soviet Union had issued statement, which was probably imminent, might be good idea hold conference between Three Western governments and FedRep. Whatever course was taken, he added, should be taken in complete unity.

Brentano said FonMin Couve de Murville had himself suggested that Berlin be on agenda de Gaulle talk with Chancellor next Wednesday.

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- 71 -
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I asked Brentano what approach he personally thought might be taken on assumption Soviet statement would denounce Four Power status. Brentano stressed we should above all absolutely reject any such statement, on grounds no repeat no State has right withdraw from commitment and hand over its responsibilities to another party. Said would be as though Fedllep were to withdraw from NATO and name Austria as its substitute. He thought this approach might have some effect Soviet Union which had shown itself sensitive to charges breaking contractual obligations.

I asked Brentano his views with regard GDR checkpoint officials being considered agents of Soviets. He said this misleading because Soviets not repeat not ~~handing over~~ handing over responsibilities to East German police but to Pankow. Said agent concept could only be sustained if East German officials acting on instructions from Soviet Union but this would not repeat not be in fact case, since they would be acting on instructions GDR. He said Pervukhin would not repeat not accept protest this basis and would simply refer us to Pankow.

I asked Brentano how he thought German political and public

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- 5 -

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opinion would react to firm Western measures which might be interpreted as possibly leading to war. He replied without hesitation that vast majority Germans consider Berlin test case, particularly after numerous repeated declarations which have led them expect strong reaction. Referred to Mayor Brandt's recent statements and to Gerstenmaier mention possibility breaking off relations with Moscow as evidence undoubted solid German support for firm reaction.

BRUCE

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William R. Tyler

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